

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EUR-12 CU-02 /070 W

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5829

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 8459

NOFORN

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT, PINR, PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: FEI I-MIN COMMENTS ON TENG RESTORATION

REF: HONG KONG 8247

SUMMARY. FEI I-MIN CORRECTED HIS EARLIER STATEMENT THAT SECRETARY VANCE WAS NOT LIKELY TO MEET TENG HSIAO-PING DURING HIS AUGUST VISIT AND COMMENTED THAT THE POSTER IN PEKING ON TENG'S RETURN APPEARED TO BE BASED ON ACTUAL DECISIONS. FEI SAID HE THOUGHT IT LIKELY THAT TENG WOULD BE NAMED PREMIER BY THE FIFTH NPC. END SUMMARY.

1. BEGINNING HIS COMMENTS TO CONGENOFFS ON THE RECENT FLURRY OF ATTENTION TO TENG HSIAO-PING (PEKING 1470, PEKING 1472),
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TA KUNG PAO PUBLISHER FIE I-MIN STATED THAT HE WANTED TO CORRECT AN EARLIER STATEMENT MADE TO CRS CHIEF ANDERSON ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF A MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY VANCE AND TENG (REFTEL). GIVEN THE PRESENT INFORMATION ON TENG, FEI THOUGHT THAT IT WAS INDEED POSSIBLE THAT TENG WOULD BE ONE OF THE OFFICIALS TO MEET SECRETARY VANCE AND THAT TENG WOULD RESUME HIS SENIOR VICE PREMIER SLOT PRIOR TO THE

AUGUST VISIT. FEI COMMENTED THAT HE BELIEVED THE REVELATIONS ANNOUNCED IN THE PEKING POSTER WERE BASICALLY ACCURATE AND REFLECTED ACTUAL DECISIONS MADE. COMMENTING THAT THE POSTER'S APPEARANCE MAY HAVE BEEN PREMATURE, FEI SAID HE PERSONALLY WAS UNSURE WHETHER OR NOT TENG WOULD GET ALL FOUR OF THE TITLES MENTIONED -- VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY AND MILITARY COMMISSION, VICE PREMIER, AND CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF -- AND NOTED THAT THE STAFF AT TA KUNG PAO WERE ALSO AWAITING CLARIFICATION ON THIS MATTER.

2. RESPONDING TO THE COMMENT THAT THE FIRST POSTERS HAD BEEN REMOVED, FEI NOTED THAT THIS WAS "STANDARD PRACTICE" AND THAT HE TOO HAD NOTED THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THESE POSTERS AND THE ONE PRAISING THE "DECISION" ON HUA KUO-FENG'S APPOINTMENT LAST OCTOBER. HE ALSO FELT THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S RESPONSE OF "NO COMMENT" TO INQUIRIES ABOUT THE POSTERS WAS A POSITIVE SIGN. ACCORDING TO FEI, THE NORMAL RESPONSE WOULD HAVE BEEN AN OUTRIGHT DENIAL IF THE REPORTS WERE NOT ACCURATE. (IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT REPORTERS' QUERIES ABOUT LAST OCTOBER'S SHANGHAI POSTERS ON NEW POSTS FOR LI HSIEN-NIEN AND YEH CHIEN-YING WERE FIRST GREETED BY AN OFFER TO "TAKE NOTE" OF THE QUESTION BY THE MINISTRY AND THEN SHORTLY AFTERWARDS BY AN OUTRIGHT DENIAL.)

3. FEI NOTED THAT WHILE HE HAD NOT EXPECTED THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE SO SUDDEN, PEOPLE KNEW SO LITTLE ABOUT PEKING'S ACTUAL CONFIDENTIAL

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TIMETABLE IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO PROJECT AN ACCURATE SEQUENCE OF TIMES FOR THE SCHEDULED MEETINGS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE PLENUM OF THE TENTH CONGRESS COULD INDEED BE MEETING NOW AND THAT IT WAS ALSO CONCEIVABLE THAT THE ELEVENTH CONGRESS COULD BE CONVENED BEFORE SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT. HE DID NOT FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS COULD BE CONVENED BEFORE THE VISIT AND REITERATED HIS EARLIER STATEMENT THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD TO READY HIMSELF FOR A TRIP TO PEKING AROUND OCTOBER 1.

4. RESPONDING TO QUESTION ABOUT THE PLENUM'S ABILITY TO TAKE DECISIONS WHICH WOULD GIVE TENG ACTUAL POSTS, FEI STATED THAT A PLENUM'S JOB WAS OFTEN "RETROSPECTIVE" IN THAT IT FORMALLY APPROVED DECISIONS TAKEN BY OTHER BODIES -- THE POLITBURO -- WHEN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WAS NOT IN SESSION. FEI AGREED THAT THE CURRENT POSTER ANNOUNCEMENT COULD ACTUALLY REFLECT THE DECISION TO PUBLICLY REVERSE THOSE TAKEN AT THE APRIL 1976 MEETING FOLLOWING THE TIEN AN MEN INCIDENT. A REVERSAL WOULD BE POSSIBLE ON THE BASIS OF INVESTIGATION, TENG'S ADMISSION OF ERRORS, AND HIS SUBSEQUENT BEHAVIOR. (SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD MEAN THAT THE ELEVENTH CONGRESS WOULD STILL OPERATE WITH A FREE HAND IN DECIDING EXACTLY

WHAT POSTS TENG WOULD HAVE THEREAFTER.) ALTHOUGH COMMENTING THAT THE NEW LEADERSHIP SET DOWN BY THE ELEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS AND NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (NPC) WOULD BE A BROADER ONE MORE REFLECTIVE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MIDDLE-AGED LEADERS, FEI STATED THAT HE NOW BELIEVED IT WAS LIKELY THAT TENG WOULD BE NAMED AS PREMIER TO LEAD THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

5. FEI ALSO NOTED THAT HE FELT THE LIAO CHENG-CHIH COMMENTS ON THE TIMING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS ON TENG'S FATE WERE ACCURATE AND THAT THERE WOULD BE OFFICIAL WORD SOON AND SURELY BEFORE THE END OF THE MONTH. FEI FURTHER REVEALED THAT TENG HSIAO-PING HAD ALREADY BEEN ACTIVE IN GETTING THE RECENT SCIENCE MEETINGS TOGETHER. ACCORDING TO FEI, TENG ALSO HAD BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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INVOLVED IN MAKING SOME REVISIONS IN THE TEXTS OF THE ARTICLES WHICH SUCCESSIVELY ON JUNE 30, JULY 8, AND JULY 16 REHABILITATED HIS THREE POSITION PAPERS ON INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE PARTY PROGRAM.
CROSS

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